

VZCZCXRO8845
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #0073/01 0161519
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 161519Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0569
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7729
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1927
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1526
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5671
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5401
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2051
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OSS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000073

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007

In Today's Papers

AKP to Call Parliamentary Meeting on Iraq

All papers report the main opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal said Turkey should send troops into northern Iraq to crush the PKK terrorists there, provided the Parliament approves a cross border incursion. Deputy Prime Minister Abdullatif Sener said after the Council of Ministers meeting Monday that AKP would call for a debate on Iraq in Parliament this week. Responding to a question, Sener said the procedure for getting authorization for cross-border incursions was different, adding that no decision about Iraq would be adopted during the debate in Parliament.

"Kirkuk 2007" Panel in Ankara

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report Iraqi Sunni and Shiite representatives participated in the "Kirkuk 2007" conference held in Ankara by the Turkish Global Strategy Institute to discuss the future of the oil-rich northern Iraqi city. The northern Iraqi Kurdish parties Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), blamed for moving Kurds into Kirkuk to alter the demographic structure of the city, were not invited to the gathering. KDP Turkey representative Omar Mirani said since the Iraqi Kurds were not invited the meeting was "not important." He said the problems of Kirkuk should be tackled in Iraq, not in other countries. Iraqi Ambassador to Turkey Sabah Umran said the conference was an "intervention" in Iraq's internal affairs. Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said in the face of criticism that the meeting was an "academic" one.

Conference Calls for More Rights for Turkey's Kurds

All papers report a conference, "Turkey Seeking Peace," called in its final declaration for economic support and development in the mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey. It called for a "mutual end to armed fighting," and for amnesty for the outlawed PKK in a way which will "not hurt the conscience of the nation." The declaration said political obstacles in front of Kurdish parties and language should

be removed, unsolved murders resolved, and the village guards system abolished.

Addressing the two-day gathering held in Ankara over the weekend, the acclaimed Turkish novelist Yasar Kemal has said Turkey called its "guerrillas" "terrorists," underlining that the low-intensity war has been going on in the mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey for the past 25 year. "We became a country fighting its own people," Kemal maintained, "What people in Turkey should understand is that if we have a single friend it is the Iraqi Kurds." Kemal's remarks caused controversy with reaction coming from two Kurdish parties in Turkey, KADEP and HAKPAR, saying there should have been a broader participation of Kurds in the conference. Several columnists criticized the meeting for not displaying clear opposition to the terrorist PKK.

Speculation Continues on Plane Crash near Anaconda Airbase
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet and others continue reporting over the weekend and on Monday about a Moldovan plane crash which killed 34 onboard, mostly Turkish workers, near Anaconda Airbase north of Baghdad last week. Bad weather conditions were blamed for the crash, but there was also speculation that the plane was shot down by an Iraqi insurgent group, Iraq Islam Army. Transport Minister Binali Yildirim has told Sabah that the US removed the wreckage of the plane before waiting for the arrival of a Turkish investigation team. Hurriyet and Radikal reported over the weekend that the widespread belief at the airbase is that the plane was brought down. Sabah quotes a forensic medicine expert saying proper tests were not carried out on the bodies. A Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) source told the English language daily Turkish Daily News that Americans have been helpful, that US officials at the airbase had offered to send a military helicopter to Baghdad to transport Turkish Embassy officials. The Turkish

ANKARA 00000073 002 OF 003

government's request to send an investigation team to the crash area was accepted both by the Iraqi government and the American forces in Iraq, MFA sources said.

Article 301 to Remain Unchanged Until after Elections
The liberal/intellectual Radikal reports Volkan Bozkir, Turkey's ambassador to the EU, has told The Financial Times that there would be no changes to Article 301 of the penal code until after the general elections, in a statement confirmed by some unidentified AKP officials. The European Union wants the article which has been used to prosecute writers and intellectuals to be scrapped. Radikal comments that the ruling AKP was concerned not to scare nationalist votes away before the upcoming polls in November. If the AKP wins the elections, it will replace the expression "Turkishness" in article 301 with the expression "Turkish nation" to prevent arbitrary lawsuits filed against intellectuals. Some AKP officials including Justice Minister Cemil Cicek oppose changes to the article, according to Radikal.

Editorial Commentary on the Middle East, President Bush's New Iraq Strategy
Sami Kohen commented in the mainstream Milliyet: "Secretary Rice's Middle East tour, which started right after the Presidential announcement of the new Iraq strategy, is aiming at getting support for this policy from Arab countries. Putting the ideals of democracy and freedom on the shelf, President Bush seems focused on settling Iraq's stability, and developing more strategic ties with the regional countries. The countries the US considers for establishing strategic ties are all Sunni nations, which is not surprising at all. The US realized that Middle East geography is in the process of shaping up based on the Sunni-Shiite axis, and decided to encourage and support a Sunni alliance in the region. These are all intentions and time will show how much success will come out of it. Secretary Rice is making her eighth trip to the region since she was appointed. Given the chaotic situation in this region, there is no hope for a better success this than during her previous seven visits."

Haluk Ulman wrote in the economic-political daily Dunya: "President Bush announced a new strategy for Iraq but it was not taken seriously, simply because nobody believes that it can provide peace

and stability to Iraq. The upcoming events will eventually throw this plan, like the previous ones, into history's waste basket. Interestingly enough, those who were supportive of Bush policy regardless of its nature, are now vocal enough to state that the new strategy will not work. This is only stating the obvious and it is utterly too late to make such an observation. The arguments that the Bush administration is using in order to persuade Congress for the approval of the new strategy do not have any validity either. The Bush team is claiming that if the new strategy is not approved, the region will drag into chaos where a division of Iraq as well as Shiite-Sunni clashes will occur. This must be political blindness. What they are claiming is that something that actually began right after the American occupation "may happen" in the future. Shiite-Sunni conflict is an everyday reality and Kurds have already separated themselves from the central authority. The American administration continues to make mistakes and pursue unrealistic goals. The new strategy hopes that the Iraqi administration with its Shiite majority will fight against Shiite militants, and also will pave the way for a larger Sunni participation. This can only be called daydreaming."

"Honor Killings" Rising in Istanbul

Mainstream Milliyet reports an alarming rise in "honor killings" in Istanbul, with 25 women killed last year alone for "disrepute of family honor." Officials from the Istanbul Governor's Office said most of the victims were women who left their homes together with their children to escape from domestic violence. Findings by a parliamentary commission also indicate that Istanbul has risen to top the list with regard to honor killings. The paper notes last

ANKARA 00000073 003 OF 003

year police received 3,670 applications complaining about violence against women and children in Istanbul.

TV Highlights
NTV, 6.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich will pay a state visit to Turkey on January 17-18 at the invitation of his Turkish counterpart Erdogan.
- Four members of the outlawed PKK have been killed in recent operations held in the southeastern provinces of Diyarbakir and Bingol. Two terrorists fleeing from the PKK in northern Iraq were handed over to the security forces.
- Traffic experts dismiss Prime Minister Erdogan's suggestion for curbing congestion in Istanbul, saying Turkey should instead consider levying a road tax inside the city. Erdogan had suggested a "visa regime" involving a freeze on the number of new cars allowed on Istanbul's roads.
- Turkey's former foreign minister Ismail Cem is receiving emergency treatment in an Istanbul hospital for lung cancer.

International News

- Iraqi President Talabani met with Syrian President Assad in Damascus on Sunday. The two leaders are expected to come together for a second time before Talabani leaves Syria on January 19.
- President Ahmadinejad lashed out at the US for trying to hide its failures in Iraq by accusing Iran of funding Iraqi insurgents.
- Germany is to introduce legislation to the European Union during its six-month presidency to ban the display of Nazi symbols.

<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON